

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claim 7; and add new claims 13 – 15 as follows:

1. (Previously Presented) A tone generator system comprising:

a first waveform storage that stores compressed waveform data, the compressed waveform data being compressed in a compression method for compressing waveform data in units of a frame comprised of a plurality of samples encoded with one of MPEG-1 Audio Layer 3 (MP3), MPEG-2, Advanced Audio Coding (AAC), or Adaptive Transform Acoustic Coding (ATRAC);

a second waveform storage;

a sequencer that sequentially receives and interprets a series of messages included in a musical composition file;

a decoder that, when said sequencer interprets a program change message into tone color changing instruction data including a channel number indicative of a channel and a program number indicative of a tone color, reads out from said first waveform storage the compressed waveform data based on the program number included in the supplied tone color changing instruction data, decodes the readout compressed waveform data into waveform data in a pulse code modulation format, and stores the decoded waveform data in the pulse code modulation format into said second waveform storage; and

a tone generator section that, when said sequencer interprets a note-on message following the program change message into sounding instruction data including the channel number, reads out from said second waveform storage the waveform data in the pulse code modulation format and generates musical tones based on the readout waveform data in the pulse code modulation format, wherein

said decoder starts to at least read out the compressed waveform data before said tone generator section starts to generate the musical tones so as to prevent a delay in generating the musical tones.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Previously Presented) A tone generator system according to claim 1, wherein said second waveform storage is operable for storing waveform data inputted by a user.

4. (Previously Presented) A tone generator system according to claim 1, wherein said decoder is operable for decoding compressed audio stream data inputted from an external device.

5. (Previously Presented) A tone generating method comprising:

sequentially receiving and interpreting a series of messages included in a musical composition file;

reading out from a first waveform storage compressed waveform data based on a program number included in the tone color changing instruction data, decoding the readout compressed waveform data into waveform data in a pulse code modulation format, and storing the decoded waveform data in the pulse code modulation format into a second waveform storage, when a program change message is interpreted into the tone color changing instruction data including a channel number indicative of a channel and the program number indicative of a tone color, the compressed waveform data being compressed in a compression method for compressing waveform data in units of a frame comprised of a plurality of samples encoded with one of MPEG-1 Audio Layer 3 (MP3), MPEG-2, Advanced Audio Coding (AAC), or Adaptive Transform Acoustic Coding (ATRAC);

and

reading out from the second waveform storage the waveform data in the pulse code modulation format, and generating musical tones based on the readout waveform data in the pulse code modulation format, when a note-on message following the program change message is interpreted into sounding instruction data including the channel number, wherein

at least reading out the compressed waveform data starts before the generation of the musical tones is started so as to prevent a delay in generating the musical tones.

6. (Previously Presented) A storage medium storing a program for executing a tone generating method, the program comprising:

a sequencer module for sequentially receiving and interpreting a series of messages included in a musical composition file;

a decoding module for reading out from a first waveform storage compressed waveform data based on a program number included in tone color changing instruction data, decoding the readout compressed waveform data into waveform data in a pulse code modulation format, and storing the decoded waveform data in the pulse code modulation format into a second waveform storage, when a program change message is interpreted into the tone color changing instruction data including a channel number indicative of a channel and the program number indicative of a tone color, the compressed waveform data being compressed in a compression method for compressing waveform data in units of a frame comprised of a plurality of samples encoded with one of MPEG-1 Audio Layer 3 (MP3), MPEG-2, Advanced Audio Coding (AAC), or Adaptive Transform Acoustic Coding (ATRAC); and

a tone generator module for reading out from the second waveform storage the waveform data in the pulse code modulation format, and generating musical tones based

on the readout waveform data in the pulse code modulation format, when a note-on message following the program change message is interpreted into sounding instruction data including the channel number, wherein

at least reading out the compressed waveform data starts before the generation of the musical tones is started so as to prevent a delay in generating the musical tones.

7. (Currently Amended) ~~[[The]]~~ A tone generating method according to claim 5, further comprising storing waveform data inputted by a user in the second waveform storage.

8. (Previously Presented) A tone generating method according to claim 5, wherein the compressed waveform data is compressed audio stream data inputted from an external device.

9. (Previously Presented) A storage medium storing a program according to claim 6, wherein the second waveform storage stores waveform data inputted by a user.

10. (Previously Presented) A storage medium storing a program according to claim 6, wherein the decoding module is operable for decoding compressed audio stream data inputted from an external device.

11. Canceled

12. Canceled

13. (New) A tone generator system comprising:

a first waveform storage that stores compressed waveform data, the compressed waveform data being compressed in a compression method for compressing waveform data in units of a frame comprised of a plurality of samples;

a second waveform storage;

a sequencer that sequentially receives and interprets a series of messages included in a musical composition file;

a decoder that, when said sequencer interprets a program change message into tone color changing instruction data including a channel number indicative of a channel and a program number indicative of a tone color, reads out from said first waveform storage the compressed waveform data based on the program number included in the supplied tone color changing instruction data, decodes the readout compressed waveform data into waveform data in a pulse code modulation format, and stores the decoded waveform data in the pulse code modulation format into said second waveform storage; and

a tone generator section that, when said sequencer interprets a note-on message following the program change message into sounding instruction data including the channel number, reads out from said second waveform storage the waveform data in the pulse code modulation format and generates musical tones based on the readout waveform data in the pulse code modulation format, wherein

said decoder starts to read out the compressed waveform data before said tone generator section starts to generate the musical tones so as to prevent a delay in generating the musical tones.

14. (New) A tone generator system according to claim 13, wherein the tone generator section generates musical tones based on waveform data inputted by a user and stored in said second waveform storage, in addition to, or in place of, the waveform data decoded by the decoder, depending on a mode set by the user with respect to one or more program numbers.

15. (New) A tone generator system according to claim 13, wherein said decoder is operable for decoding compressed audio stream data inputted from an external device.

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